***Our Position in Christ

7LW-014***

We continue this evening with the 7 Last Words Number 14. The subject of the wall between God and man and the divine solution for that is a subject of enormous importance, enormous importance. It is the heart of what people do not understand and why all the confusion and all the deception can be played out there. One of our ladies after the service this morning asked me about the revival which has been going on for several years now in Pensacola, Florida. There people are up in the highest kind of emotional orgy that you can imagine, a Charismatic operation. And God is supposedly walking among them. I didn't see the TV report on this, but I was told that as they interviewed one lady, she was shaking all over. Her hands were shaking. When the person interviewing asked, do you shake like that all the time? She said, no, only when I'm in the presence of god. Well, the question is, which god is she in the presence of? Indeed, that is the god that's making her shake. But it's not the God who is the creator.

**Living When They Want Their Ears Tickled**

Now, there was another interesting observation by a group of our people who attended a prophecy conference in our area. On the program were some of the big guns, our own Tommy Ice, also Dave Hunt, and others. Cheryl Dozier was there. I haven't asked her beforehand if she would do this, because she would have said no. So I'm going to ask her now and she can't say no when I ask her to come up here and give you just a little briefing that she gave me before the service as to what was going on in that service, what was being taught, and then the admonition of the leader. Mrs. Dozier, come up here to the microphone. Andy Warhol says that everybody has 15 minutes of fame. This is yours.

[Mrs. Cheryl Dozier speaking.] "It was a very interesting Bible conference. What was very interesting was that we found out that we already knew all these things because we are taught by a pastor that teaches the Rapture, the Tribulation, and all those things, and that we are Pre-millennialists. And there were people at that conference that have taught at our church. There was Mal Couch, the President of Tyndale Seminary, also Dr. Tommy Ice. Also Tim LaHaye was very, very good. He's very knowledgeable about the end times. And the man that spoke at dinner was a former Roman Catholic, and very, very knowledgeable about Catholicism. And he was really good about getting the word out to Catholics about the difference between the Catholic Church. And I was amazed when Dave Hunt said the thing about Billy Graham and people like that who are thought of as very evangelistic. He read some things they said way back in the '50's, being friends with the top Roman Catholics and other leaders who are totally different from what we believe. And we heard the gasp in the audience when they mentioned Billy Graham. And we said we've already been told all these things. Anyway, Mal Couch introduced all the speakers and one of the things he said was what you need to do if these things are not being taught in your church about these topics, you need to go out to your pastor next Sunday. You need to look him in the eye, make sure you're kind about it, and ask what do you believe about the end times and why aren't you teaching us these things. What's going to happen? Is the church going to be Raptured and all these kinds of things? And I told him again we don't need to ask him because we are already being taught on that and we know all these things. So I was just grateful for Berean and for Dr. Danish and that we have a pastor that does not keep us in the dark."

[Dr. Danish speaking again.]Thank you. Good. How sweet it is the Word of God. And it's important that we remember that, why do people run prophecy conferences or special clinics on any subject? They'll go to that by droves because they're starving for the knowledge of the Word of God. They're not getting that in their churches. And when we do say this is what God designed the local church for and this is what we're going to be true to, one thing he should have said when he said go talk to your pastor, is to realize that that pastor is going to look back with his eyes and he's going to say, they'll kill me if I do that. They'll quit coming. They'll drop out by droves. People will filter in, filter out, and a handful will be there. The big timers will be down the street able to have all the money to do all the things that people want done. That's the other side of the coin. But isn't that exactly what 2 Timothy tells us, that in the end times they will want preachers who will scratch their tickling ears and tell them the doctrines that they want to hear and not the Word of God. That's exactly the day we're living in.

That's why it is no small thing for you to realize that when we talk about what seems so simple, like the Great Wall between God and man, this is the heart of what keeps humanity from finding that narrow door in that narrow road into eternal life. You would think that some of the people who know us well over years of experience would be here. Instead, they say, you counter my political views. You counter my socialistic views. You counter my freedom to be able to break the Commandments sometime. You just make me feel in such a way that I don't want to come there. Like one person said, why should I sit there and feel guilty listening to you? But the person was not listening to me, and the individual was listening to the Word of God and indeed, that's what it says. It's alive and active, and it will cut between the soul and spirit and it will make the difference.

Now, why should Christians have to be dumb dodo birds? Why should Christians have to be treated as if they could not understand and enter with great joy and great capacity and the deep things of the Spirit of God? They shouldn't. That is your heritage. And any Christians who are denied that are going to find that it has cost them great rewards for eternity. The result will be a great delusion, great deception. The result will be that those pastors are going to stand there condemned before God because they didn't do their job. It is so easy to preach to the emotions. It is so easy to get a few stories. It is so easy to string them together. You don't have to study very much. You don't have to dig. You don't have to organize. And after you've got a little experience, it's easy to play that.

One man came to me one time completely appalled. He said, I went to the biggest downtown church in Dallas, a big time name. I tell you that the whole service was this big time preacher that everybody knows, stringing a half a dozen stories together, milking them for all the emotions, and never a bit of explanation of the Word of God. But by George at the end, that invitation was given. No gospel, but come on down folks, we're going to get you into the church. This will get you into Heaven. This will get you into our congregation. A church already with so many members that a fourth of them couldn't attend church at one time. So what does that tell you? Who cares whether you attend church? You're not going to miss anything anyhow. We're only here to kick up the numbers and to kick up the income.

**The Consequences of Sin**

Seven Last Words, No. 14. This is really the important Word of God. Here's the question. Whatever happened to the human race in the Garden of Eden? (You folks come on down. You don't have to stand. We have lots of room. We'll hold the offering plate until you're here.) Whatever happened to the human race in the Garden of Eden? Here's what happened. They all, first of all, became enslaved to Satan, held captive in his slave market of sin. Now, I've been revising some of these terminologies, so don't get upset. You did get it, what I said the first time, but I'm trying to refine it to where it's more accurate. Here's the verse, Romans 6:17-18 that illustrate this. Romans 6:17-18, "But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, [to which you were taught, justification by faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.] "and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness." That's the other side. I want to be free from the Old Sin Nature, which takes salvation, but then I want to also become a slave of doing what is right. The slave market of sin was the first problem that every human being faces. Why should I do what is right now as a Christian? Because it's the right thing to do, that's it. You don't need any other reason.

Secondly, what happened to the human race in the Garden of Eden? They all became morally guilty for the original sin of Adam as well as for their own personal evil. Romans 3:23 describes that. The second block was our moral guilt. Romans 3:23, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Where do they all sin? In Adam. When he sinned, his moral guilt fell upon them, so they sinned with him. So all of them are morally guilty for their original sin as well as their personal evil.

The third block is that everybody is born into the human race, spiritually dead. Romans 5:12, "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned." The result was that all of them are dead spiritually because of the one sin of Adam. It caused all to have a sin nature. Therefore, all are dead.

Then there is the block of the Holiness of God. What does God demand of a person to be able to enter Heaven? 1 Peter 1:16 declares what is required: "because it is written, YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY." You shall be as holy as God Himself, absolute righteousness to get to Heaven. Then you are to act accordingly in your life subsequent to that. You shall be holy because I am holy.

Now God in His loving kindness removed those destructive effects of Adam's sin by the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross for all my mankind. That's why I say that this little bit of information is enormously important. If you understand this, you'll never be tempted to try to go about figuring out how to save yourself: coming up with something that's good enough, coming up with something that'll gain merit with God, you'll realize you can't do it. You're spiritually dead. A person that is spiritually dead cannot do anything? The sin nature contaminates your best efforts.

So what happened? Slave market of sin was solved by being redeemed from Satan's grasp by Christ on the cross. Moral guilt was expiate it so that your record is cleared. Spiritual death was solved by giving you regeneration so that your human spirit is born again spiritually. Then the holiness of God is resolved by propitiating, satisfying the justice of God for sin, and by the imputation of absolute righteousness.

We come now to the final block in this terrible wall, and that is that we are born in Adam. 1 Corinthians 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive." Adam is viewed as the federal head of the human race. God sees all humanity in one of 2 people, either in Adam as the fallen head of a dead race, spiritually dead race. The destiny or those who are in Adam is the lake of fire. For all those who are in him, there is nothing but death, the eternal separation from God. We are born in the position of death in Adam. Or God sees us in the position of life, which is Jesus Christ is the head of a new creation of redeemed spiritually alive people who are destined for Heaven because they are in Him.

**In Adam or In Christ**

The only place you can be your either in Adam or you're in Christ, and you yourself cannot transfer over. You yourself cannot say I want to get out of Adam and I want to get in Christ so this is what I will do. It's what God has done that makes it possible. Everyone is born in Adam, so everyone is separated by this block from God. Adam brought death to all his posterity by what he did.

Now, the Bible as in this passage you see, always treats Adam as a real historical character. It builds on this fact that there really was a man named Adam, created by God from the dust of the ground, and then received life by breathing into him by God Himself.

Now, Bill Moyers, who is a graduate of the Southwest Theological Seminary in Fort Worth of the Southern Baptists and who is a big hot shot in the liberal political socialist world, who is constantly on TV braying about something and spewing off about something and parading himself as an authority in spiritual matters, recently said the time has come when we must recognize that Adam and Eve did not really exist. They are just made up story people to illustrate certain religious concepts. There never was a Garden of Eden, and there never was somebody named Adam and Eve in them. That's not uncommon. Preachers by the carload believe that, and teach that all the time. They have something less than an appreciation for the sanctity of life. They treat the Lord Jesus Christ as something less than the perfect sinless God-man.

One of our ladies visited her relatives recently, went to church, a Methodist church. It was at Easter time. So everybody is speaking about Christ and Mary. The preacher told the congregation that no doubt Mary bore the burdens that mothers do, that when she told Jesus to go and do something, He walked off and went the other way. Now, most of you recoil with horror from that kind of a statement. I mean, this is a church that is packed with people, loaded with money and great prestige in that particular city. Jesus disobeyed His mother? But wait a minute, the Scripture said after the incident when He was 12 years old in Jerusalem, and they picked Him back up and took Him home to Nazareth, that He went home with His parents and He was obedient to them in every way. When this was discussed at home, one of the family members said well he didn't really mean that. So words don't mean anything? Jesus, I want you to do that. He goes and does His own thing. Sad thing is that that is not the exception. That is a common attitude toward what the Bible has to say, even about the person of Christ. That's because people are in Adam; and in Adam, you're blind to spiritual realities. And a lot of the pulpits have people in them who are in Adam.

**The Significance of the First Adam**

The Bible always treats Adam as a real historical character and it builds on this fact. He's called the first Adam in his role as the representative of all mankind. Adam was created by God out of the dust of the ground. Then he was made a living soul with a living human spirit by a breath of God into that inert matter. The origin of human life is described for us in Genesis 1:26-27. It was a creative act of God. The details of that creation are in Genesis 2:7. It was entirely an act of God, and when Adam came to life, he was suddenly a completed perfect super human being at the epitome of the human race. Oh yeah, he had the appearance of age. He probably looked at the prime of life. He probably had a belly button. You'll have to check that yourself someday in Heaven, he'll show you. But he was perfectly, fully normal in every respect. He was a genuine human being.

He [Adam] did not come by evolution. Evolution is nonsense from one end to the other. And yet it is what is at the heart of the antagonism of God in the public education system, even though it violates natural laws; Laws of First and Second Laws of Thermodynamics dynamics. Even though the C-14 carbon techniques, of which there are much more refined now, even that one, they have not been able to demonstrate by anything they have found in carbon reserves, residues that goes back more than 10000 years, which falls well within the range of what the Scripture talks about. So this nonsense of evolution, which is what liberal churches teach and build upon, leads next to denying that Adam and Eve ever really existed as real human beings. Adam was created a mature man as part of a perfect creation, and he was in an ideal environment.

But God viewed Adam as the first of many who were to follow. He was the one who was viewed as the head of the human race. And therefore, he had upon him a responsibility of acting in behalf of all those who were his unborn posterity. This principle, first of all, if you see it in Scripture, you will see how it works. It is not so surprising that one man becomes a federal head and what he does impacts upon all those who follow him. They carry and bear upon them the marks of what he does. Hebrews 7:1-10. This is referring to a priest of God which existed at the time of the patriarch Abraham. Abraham mounts a military campaign in order to get back people that were in his household which were captured and taken away from him by surrounding kings. Abraham mounts this campaign and successfully recovers the people and the booty from the battle. That's a frame of reference.

**The Melchizedek Priesthood**

Now, all of a sudden, here comes a priest, somebody representing God, long before the Mosaic Code, long before the time of Moses, way back to the founder of the Jews, Abraham himself. Hebrews recalls this incident. Hebrews 7 "For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, [which means peace.] priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the Kings and blessed him, "to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is King of Peace." King of Salem-Peace, king of righteousness, was the way Melchizedek, the priest, was characterized.

This act on the part of Abraham of giving a tenth, a tithe of the spoils of war, was a sign that he was inferior to Melchizedek. That he was in obedience, subjection to Melchizedek. Melchizedek was superior to Abraham as the point of contact with God. So consequently, here, Abraham, from whose body is to descend the Levitical tribe and the Aaronic priesthood, and Abraham is treated as the federal head who is acting for all of them who are to be born from him.

Speaking of this Melchizedek, it describes him in words as close as they can to someone who almost is divine because Melchizedek represents the one who is the priesthood of Jesus Christ, the priesthood of righteousness, the priesthood of peace. The church age believer is a priest. But he is not an Aaronic priest. He is a priest of the Order of Melchizedek, because he's part of the priesthood of Jesus Christ, who is our high priest. So they describe Melchizedek in a way as a type of Jesus Christ, and they are describing him in terms, human terms, to describe the eternity of Christ as deity.

So Hebrews 7:3 says of Melchizedek, "Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he abides a priest perpetually." Now that's as close as they could come to describing Jesus Christ. Melchizedek, we didn't know where he came from. Melchizedek, we don't have any genealogy. Melchizedek, we don't know who his father was, who his mother was. We don't know when he began. We don't know when he ended his days. But one thing he is, is a priest perpetually, which is exactly what was finally stated about Christ, that He is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Now Hebrews 7:4, "Now observe how great this man was to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest of spoils. [5] " And those indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have commandment in the Law to collect a tenth from the people." We come down through the years. The tribe of Levi is born as descendants of Abraham. And the tribe of Levi, since it did not have a portion in the land, it was the priestly tribe, where did they get their sustenance? Where did they get their care? They got it from the religious tithes that were brought to the temple, from the animals that they had a right to take certain parts of for themselves in the process of the sacrificial system. They, the Levites, received tithes from the people of Israel.

Now, immediately, the one who gives the tithe is the inferior; the one who receives it, is the superior. So here Levi is superior to the people of Israel from whom they receive their offerings and their tithes, this financial support.

Hebrews 7:5, "And those indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have commandment in the Law to collect a tenth from the people, that is, from their brethren, although these are descended from Abraham." So here is part of the Jewish descendants of Abraham paying tithes to other parts of the Jewish people descended from Abraham.

Hebrews 7:6, "But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them collected a tenth from Abraham, and blessed the one who had the promises." But here was somebody who collected tithes from the Jewish people through their father, Abraham, that included even the Levitical priesthood, who, while they gather tithes from Israel, the people, they themselves had paid tithes to his superior priests. That's the connection, that all of a sudden, Levi and the Aaronic priesthood is the inferior representation of priesthood. There is a superior one, as was indicated by Abraham, paying tithes to that superior priesthood, the priesthood of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 7:7-10, "But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater." Melchizedek was the greater, and he blessed the lesser one, which was Abraham, and thus the descendants of Abraham. "And in this case mortal men receive tithes, but in that case one receives them of whom it is witnessed that he lives on." This comes from a superior priest. "And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, "for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him." There you have the divine explanation of how one's forebearer does something that then impacts upon all those who are born down the line from him. So here you have the scriptural principle of federal headship responsibility: Melchizedek, priest of God, representing the future priesthood of Jesus Christ who would be then the high priest.

In Hebrews 7:17, we say "For it is witnessed of Him, [Jesus Christ, the coming Messiah,] 'THOU ART A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK." Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek. This act was imputed to Levi, who is yet unborn in Abraham, so that he acted, Levi acted, in paying tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham. So the priesthood of Jesus Christ is superior to the Aaronic priesthood. Hebrews 7:22 says "so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant." Christ is of a superior order.

**Adam's Federal Headship**

And so the sin of Adam on the basis of this federal headship imputation is imputed to the whole race, the whole race as yet unborn in Adam. Yet when Adam acted, he acted in behalf of all of us. That is what we refer to as original sin. That is what the Catholics think they have to baptize a baby for, to wash away this original sin, the moral guilt that is upon all of us because of what Adam did.

Adam, when he was guilty of sin, died spiritually immediately. But he also died physically. You and I die spiritually because we have an Old Sin Nature which we inherited from our parents, and we die physically because of our direct participation in Adam's sin. The reason we die physically is because of what Adam did as our representative. How many people know that? And when you know that, how on earth are you going to solve some of these impossible problems on your own? We die spiritually because we have an Old Sin Nature. That Old Sin Nature is transmitted to us through our human father genetically. So because of our genetic father, we immediately die spiritually when we take our first breath. Jesus Christ did not have a human father. Therefore, when He took His first breath, He did not die spiritually.

But we die physically because of direct impact upon us from Adam's sin. Romans 5:12 points this out when it says "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned." Death spread to all men. Everybody dies because all sin? What about babies? They don't sin. What about those who are mentally incompetent? They're not held guilty, they're "non compos mentis." They're not held guilty of their sin. They are under the grace covering of God like babies are. But something happened so that everybody dies. But the only reason he says you die is because you sin. The justice of God demands that. Well, when does a baby sin? He did it in the Garden of Eden with Adam, as did all of us.

Had Adam not sinned, what would have happened? Spiritual life would have become automatic to his posterity. We're guessing: probably a period of testing, a period of opportunity to be examined by making our choice toward the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. And had Adam and Eve obeyed that commandment of God after a period of trial, mankind would have been brought into an impossible position of ever sinning, and there would have never been all the mess that has come since. Death would have never entered the picture. Our bodies would have lived forever. Our human spirit would never have died.

**Adam Sinned so All Sin**

But because sin did come in, all sinned in Adam. So infants, incompetents, die physically who do not knowingly choose to sin. They sinned, each of them in Adam. In Romans 5:14 this is pointed out, "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come." How did Adam sin? He sinned against a rule. God said, don't do this. Don't eat of that tree, or you will die. Yet we've got infants, incompetents, they didn't sin against the known rule yet they die.

Now, when the Mosaic Law came along, you had a lot of rules; six hundred and thirteen of them, five hundred thirteen, something like that. Lots of them. All these rules are there for you to keep. So when you sin now, it's a deliberate breaking of what, you know, you shouldn't do. But still, people died when they didn't have those rules because Adam had already broken the rule he knew. So those who are dead in Adam can have no fellowship with God. That's the point of this most terrible of all the barriers between God and man, this capstone on this wall in Adam. And there's no way out, no human effort can get you out of Adam. No effort on your part can take you out of that place of death.

1 Corinthians 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive." The first of the second part, the last part of 1 Corinthians 15:22, declares that those who are in Christ as spiritually alive, they will live in Heaven. They have had this wall removed from that for them.

Jesus Christ is the last Adam. 1 Corinthians 15:45 says "So also it is written, ' The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.' The last Adam became a life-giving spirit." It is not wise to refer to Jesus Christ as the second Adam. It is interesting the Holy Spirit very carefully uses the word last, not second. Because if you say second, what does that imply? That there could be a third and fourth. There are lots of nuts running around who think that they are Christ reincarnated. "It is written the first man, Adam, [the first Adam] became a living soul." God had to breathe life into him. But notice the last Adam, Jesus Christ. He is a life giving spirit. Nobody had to breathe life into Him. He gives life where Adam had to receive life. We have to be born again, spiritually by regeneration. That is the result of believing in Christ who redeems us from being in Adam and places us into Christ.

**Positional Truth, Our Position in Christ**

So God now sees the Christian in a very wonderful position. He sees the Christian as in Christ. So the penalty of sin has been removed. We've seen that by expiation, our record of sin blotted out. The justice of God has been satisfied. The righteousness of Jesus Christ has been imputed to us so that we are declared justified. Jesus Christ as the last Adam becomes a new federal head. The federal head of the first Adam takes us down into the Lake of Fire. The federal head of the last Adam, Jesus Christ, takes us into the New Jerusalem. We're talking about positional truth. This is our position in Jesus Christ. That is always an important distinction to make.

**In the Outer Circle - Protected by the Power of God**

Here's our familiar diagram that helps us to grasp, to illustrate. This is also one of those things of enormous importance. This little diagram, invented at the kitchen table of 1012 East 6th Street one day, has really revealed the hearts of who knows how many human beings who are worried about losing their salvation and dropping out of Christ and back into Adam. Because this little diagram illustrates positional truth where you're ultimately going to be. But at the same time you are here in salvation, positional truth. You are also potentially in the inner circle where you can step out and sin. This is your life circle temporal daily life. But you can never leave that eternal circle, that outer circle of eternal life. You could never leave that position because it isn't dependent upon what you are or what you do. It is dependent upon who and what Jesus Christ is. 1 Peter 1:5, "who are protected by the power of God [Speaking of saved people who are protected by the power of God] through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." You come under the protective custody of God once you are saved. Once you've accepted Christ as your savior, you're under his protective custody. That is your position. I say that that's a great relief to know that. It's an enormous relief to know that.

I come across people; sometimes there are people that we have known from days past, and they have stepped way over the line as Christians, as believers. And they have really gone down to the depths of sin and abandonment and evil, some to the point where their very lives are now threatened; people who really knew better. You wonder, how can that person ever have been saved at all? How could he ever do that? But you see, there is always the Sin Nature. That's the snake in the woodpile. And that viper can hit you at any time that you are careless about maintaining your Inner Circle Temporal Fellowship by confession of known sins.

**In the Inner Circle through Confession of Known Sin**

The Christians daily walk is this inner circle. When that is sin, you step out of that inner circle. What happens is you're now here in the outer circle of eternal fellowship. The outer circle of eternal fellowship is a relationship that cannot be changed. When you sin, you are in a temporal fellowship where your experience of fellowship with God the Holy Spirit, is broken. You are not on good terms with God your Father when you are out of that inner circle. This is the area of carnality. This is the area of the spiritual Christian.

Now, all of those terms and all those verses clarify that in greater detail and we may have time in the future to go through that. But I want to read an extended passage of Scripture to make very clear that positional truth, trusting in Christ as savior, has put you in Christ, and putting you in Christ puts you in this eternal circle of a relationship with God, eternal fellowship. But that's position. Conduct your conduct here (pointing to inner circle). You begin filled with the Spirit. Your conduct hear is obedient as Adams was. But when you sin, you step out of the inner circle. Now what? (pointing to the outer circle) You're not controlled by the Holy Spirit anymore. You're now controlled by the Old sin nature as pointed out in Romans 6:12. You are now carnal Christian. You're operating just like an unbeliever (1 Corinthians 3:1&3). The spiritual Christian is controlled by the Holy Spirit. That's what a spiritual Christian is. That's not something you do or feel, it's what you are. The only way to get back into the inner circle, so that once more the Spirit of God can be guiding you, is the confession of known sins. 1 John 1:9 brings you right back into that inner circle. That's what we mean by maintaining your temporal fellowship.

**The Outer Circle is Loss of Rewards, Not Loss of Heaven**

Now, if you go all of your life, and nobody's ever explained this to you, you're always spending your whole life out of that inner circle, will you go to Heaven? Of course you will. That's what 1 Corinthians 3 tells us. But you are going to be a poor hound-dog up there in Heaven compared to the riches of treasures and rewards. Because all you did was be a human being who worked, ate, slept, worked, ate, slept. You're on a treadmill just to crank out the number of years that has been allotted to you. But the fulfillment of Ephesians 2:10, the works which God has preordained for you to do, you never come near that. Your mission is never fulfilled. It is no small thing what these people do in training and in serving God. This is of critical importance. So what we're dealing with, to be in Christ is to be in this eternal fellowship. But the carnal nature will bring you back as if you were still in Adam. It'll take you out of this inner circle, puts you in the Outer Circle. Position still keeps you safe, but your conduct now is unbecoming a Christian.

**Ephesians 5:1-18**

Extended passage: Ephesians 5:1-18 tells it all. Ephesians 5:1-18, "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;" That is a technical term, beloved. That means to be in the beloved one, which is Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:6 uses that term. Ephesians 1:6, "to the praise of the glory of His grace, [Salvation is to the praise of the glory of His grace. Saving sinners is to the praise of the glory of His grace,] which He freely bestowed on us in the beloved." So he speaks to us, as those who are aware in the outer circle of positional truth. Ephesians 5:1-2, "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; " and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma." The Greek word, what do you think it is for love? It's agape love. It's the love that is described there brilliantly in that second verse. That is what agape love is. It's a love which is self-giving, a sacrificial offering of oneself, a love which is a fragrant aroma in the nostrils of God because of the life that you're living. Where? Not positional, but in your experience here in the inner circle.

Ephesians 5:3, "But do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints." What are you saying? Paul, are you telling me that a Christian can be immoral, sexually immoral? Are you telling me that a Christian can have an impure mind, an impure mouth? Are you telling me that a Christian can be greedy for material gain, which the Bible says is the same thing as idol worship? He said don't even let these things be named among you as those who are the saints of the most high God. Saints what? Those who are in Christ. You're here in positional truth and you're in the inner circle. And if you're in the inner circle, then you should act according to the one you're in, in Christ. But verse 3 talks about the Christian who steps out of the inner circle and bingo, he's the Sin Nature all over again.

Ephesians 5:4, "and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, [Oh, boy, silly talk. There's some people that can't do anything but talk. Usually it's silly talk.] or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks." Dirty jokes - that's unbecoming those who are in Christ. It is unbefitting their lifestyle.

Ephesians 5:5, "For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God." I hope you know how to interpret that verse. I hope you're not going to say that that verse is dealing with unbelievers. It isn't. The whole context here is dear children, who are in the beloved one, in Christ. You are in Christ, therefore, there is a way of life for which you are to live befitting being in Christ. Boy, this gets really thick here. Here's a person who's in Christ who can be immoral, impure, who can be covetous, and covetousness is idolatry. What are they not going to get? They're going to get salvation. What they're not going to get is a place of authority and of esteem in the Millennial Kingdom. You are not going to get a place of rulership in the Kingdom of Christ in the Millennial. That is where the loss of rewards comes in. You have to go back to 1 Corinthians 3 to see that connection. It is the kingdom of the Millennium that you Christians are going to be the people who are running things. You are the ones who are going to be in charge, and that's what you're not going to have.

Ephesians 5:6, "Let no one deceive you with empty words, [at the pulpit] for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience." Don't let some yo-yo tell you that Jesus was disobedient to His mother so that you can feel that it's okay when your kids are disobedient to you. That's empty words. [7] "Therefore do not be partakers with them; [Why on earth would the Christian want to run with the dogs and their evil way of life? Especially with all the hazardous consequences of that in every direction imaginable?] [8] "For you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light [9] (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), [10] trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. [11] And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them;" You are in Christ! So don't live as if you were still an Adam! [12] For it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret." The way some people talk is just downright degrading. And there are young people who think it is cute to use degrading language. Yet they call themselves in Christ.

Ephesians 5:13, "But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, [doctrine] for everything that becomes visible is light. [14] "For this reason it says, 'Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." You carnal Christians blowing your lives, wake up, and get with it. Stop excusing it. You can't use your spiritual gifts. [15] "Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, [16] "making the most of your time, because the days are evil. [17] "So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." Here's the kicker, Verse 18. The Will of the Lord - knowing doctrine, the indwelling Holy Spirit. Verse 18, "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit."

You want to do right? Stay in the inner circle, that's the filling of the Holy Spirit; confession of known sin brings you back in. Do not lie to yourself. And do not think you can lie to God. When there has been a breach of fellowship, admit it and get back in. If you want the young people among us to do right, they have to be filled with the Spirit. Otherwise, they as Christians will do all these terrible things that the context talks about. It is only when you live here in the Inner Circle that you have the power of the Spirit of God to enable you to say no to the Sin Nature, and yes to Christ in you, the hope of glory. That's what it means to be in Christ.

God, our Father. We thank you so much for this time together. We pray that we will again appreciate the fact that we've been able to learn what Thou hast to say to us. In Jesus name, Amen.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1999

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